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JAPANESE TORPEDO BOATS BEGIN THE WAR

GREAT CITY IS REDUCED BY FLAMES

Baltimore Ravaged By Fire for Thirty Hours, Meeting Fearful Loss Estimated to Be Millions.

Largest Fire Fighting Force Ever Used Combat Without Result.

NOT A SINGLE LIFE IS LOST

Public Buildings Leading Mercantile Houses Go Up In Smoke--Hospitals Filled With Sufferers.

Baltimore, Feb. 8.—The fire which started Sunday morning about 11 o'clock in the dry goods house of John E. Hurst & Co., and which for almost 20 hours raged with unabated fury, despite the efforts of probably the largest fire-fighting force ever used, was brought under control this afternoon. At the present time, while there are large fires blazing at places in the ruins, it is thought these will either be put out by the firemen as soon as they can be reached, or else will burn themselves out. Whichever way they may be extinguished, it is now highly improbable that any further spread will occur, though, should a strong wind arise, danger would again become imminent. The area burnt over is 140 acres, located in the heart of the city. Public buildings, newspaper offices, the principal mercantile establishments, warehouses and portions of wharves have been consumed.

Not a single life has been lost, and no one is seriously injured, although there are many in the hospitals suffering from burns, scalds and wounds. Fire apparatus was brought from New York, Washington, Jersey City and Wilmington.

Not even a close approximation can

be made of the loss. No guess can be made of the insurance. An expert, the city building inspector, estimates the loss in buildings alone at \$150,000,000. On the other hand, it is said the insurance estimates do not place the loss at so great a figure. So far there has been no systematic attempt to fix values.

The cheering story that the fire had been checked spread rapidly over the city, and the crowds that had all day surged over the tightly drawn fire lines decided to return homeward.

During the afternoon a wall of flame ate its way in a southerly and westerly direction towards the water. Sporadic fires sprang into existence and caused the withdrawal of apparatus and men from the line of battle. Buildings, old and new, large and small, stores, shops, every imaginable class of business vanished as the fire swept onward. As the day wore on the forefront of the fire neared Jones Falls, a small stream that trends north and south and separates Baltimore from that portion of the city known as East Baltimore. This little stream was the last stand. If the fire reached it—if, by flying embers or a rush of flame, the fire could cross and gain a foothold—its extent could not be foretold.

Tremendous efforts were made to block it. Dynamite was freely used the fire apparatus was centered and all the skill of the fire fighters was called into play to defeat the element that had eaten up millions of dollars' worth of property. Human skill, pluck, grit and unflinching courage won. The fire was checked. But behind it lay a great waste of more than 110 acres in extent. Every street that led to the fore of the area was crowded with spectators. Down the narrow street, black smoke hung densely, split now and then by a red glare of flames.

The crash of falling buildings was lost in the roar of exploding dynamite as it was used to demolish structures as yet untouched by fire.

In the early hours of the morning the army of fire fighters coped against overwhelming odds and when day broke the flames were raging along the wharves and focused about the great power house of the United Railway Company, which furnishes power for all the street railways of the city. Then the flames ate their way with undiminished force southward, following the lines of Jones Falls and were finally checked near the waters' edge at West Falls avenue, in the southeast section of the city.

RUSSIA PRECIPITATES CONFLICT BY LANDING DIVISION OF TROOPS

Japan's Patience Becomes Exhausted and Makes Seizure of Merchant Ships-- Escorts Vessels to Sasebo.

War So Long Predicted Has Actually Been Begun, But No Formal Declaration Has Yet Been Made--Orders Prepared At Washington For American Squadron to Observe Operations, But Permission Must First Be Obtained.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 8.—An official dispatch received here says that Japanese torpedo boats have attacked the Russian squadron in the outer roads of Port Arthur and that three Russian ships were damaged.

London, Feb. 8.—In dispatches of date Nagasaki, Saturday, February 6, and which were delayed by censor, the correspondent of the Daily Telegraph asserts that Russia deliberately precipitated the crisis by dispatching a few days ago from Port Arthur, a transport loaded with a full division of troops and escorted by a fleet, and landing them near Yalu river thus occupying northern Korea.

Japanese patience became exhausted and today Japan moved her ships and took unrestricted possession of certain merchant vessels, including the Shikha and Manchuria. The correspondent continues:

"Two other Russian vessels were seized and escorted to Sasebo, Japan." The Daily Telegraph says it supposes the foregone seizures occurred at Masampo, but the censor suppressed location.

Washington, Feb. 8.—Tentative orders have been prepared for sending the cruiser squadron of the Asiatic fleet northward from Subig bay to the vicinity of Port Arthur to observe Japanese and Russian naval operations. The orders will not be sent unless they are agreeable to Russia and Japan. When the orders were prepared today it was expected they would be sent forthwith, in view of the restraining instructions they contained to observe strict neutrality. Secretary Moody, however, is not willing that this country shall give ground even for suspicion either by Russia or Japan, and it has therefore been decided these governments shall be asked if the dispatch of a cruiser squadron will embarrass either combatant.

That Japan has fully determined on war is evident from a cablegram received at the navy department today from Lieutenant Marsh, saying the Japanese naval division had left for Chemulpo. The seizure of Seoul, the general naval board believes, will be Japan's first act of war.

Count Cassini, the Russian ambassador, called by appointment on Secretary Hay this afternoon. Count Cassini informed the secretary that Russia was convinced Japan has all along been anxious for war and her breaking off of diplomatic relations at the moment when Russia was putting forth the utmost effort to make concessions that would preserve peace, was evidence of bad faith.

In Russian circles it is not expected that Japan will formally declare war, but she will attempt to catch Russia unawares.

At the Japanese legation it was said tonight there was no further news on the situation to be given out. At the Russian embassy no cables came from any source.

Paris, Feb. 8.—The Echo de Paris publishes the following, attributed to a person of high official standing:

"Opinion at the foreign office is very pessimistic, but I can assure you that French diplomacy will be equal to the task of striving to offset a conclusion and sparing Japan the crushing defeat which threatens her. The final crushing of Japan is certain and under the conditions France considers it to the interest of Great Britain, Japan's ally,

to exercise decisive pressure in order to avert war. There is no doubt that France is ready, if the Japanese government is willing, to offer her mediation to Japan and Russia, if it is not too late. Lord Lansdowne has offered Japan Great Britain's good offices and King Edward has sent a long telegram to the mikado, begging him to reflect.

"At the present time China is remaining neutral. The intervention of a third power being unlikely, a general conflagration in the far east is not to be feared.

"At the first decisive defeat sustained by Japan, France and Great Britain will renew the offer of their good offices should these have been declined the first time."

The foreign office expects to receive long telegrams today from the French diplomatic representatives at Tokio and St. Petersburg. The Gaulois, maintaining that war has been forced on Russia by the vain glorious folly of Japan, that parvenu of civilization, declares that Russia is about to shed her blood for Europe, whom she will save from the yellow peril.

It is probable that a collective note, signed by the British, French and German, and it is hoped, the American chancelleries, will shortly be addressed to Japan, notifying her of the neutrality of these four powers in whatever may happen. Of the papers published here the Gil Blas alone does not express sympathy for Russia but declares that the power which did not help France at the time of the Fashoda incident cannot expect Frenchmen to risk their skins for Russian interests in Manchuria. The Matin is strongly pro-Russian and accuses Japan of aggressive brutality.

The correspondent of the Matin in London telegraphs another interview with Baron Hayashi, the Japanese minister there, who told him that Japan has already notified China that in the event of her victory the integrity of China will be respected. The minister hinted that one of the principal objects of the Japanese in the beginning of the campaign will be the destruction of the railroad from Harbin to Port Arthur and that Japan hoped for much from the Manchurian brigades, who detest the Russians.

RUSSIAN REPLY NEVER SENT.

So Reiterates Japanese Minister at London--Military Steps Begun.

London, Feb. 8.—Baron Hayashi, the Japanese minister, has informed the Associated Press that military steps contemplated by Japan for the preservation of its interests in the far east have already commenced.

The minister was careful to point out, however, that this does not mean actual hostilities but strategic action through pouring Japanese troops into Korea and Manchuria. This, he stated, is now in progress.

Baron Hayashi calculates that forces adequate to meet any emergency will have been fully disembarked within two or three days. He regards the breaking off of negotiations tantamount to war and does not look for any formal declaration. The minister reiterates the statement that the Russian reply was not delivered and declares his belief to be that it never was sent.

Great Excitement Prevails. Port Arthur, Feb. 8.—The Japanese

consul at Chefoo has sent a telegram to a Japanese elder here urging the departure of all Japanese from Port Arthur and Port Dalry.

The greatest excitement prevails here. No steamers are available and the Japanese are trying to charter a sailing vessel. They are hastily selling off their property and winding up their business. Japan has been telegraphically cut off from this port for 10 days.

A detachment of Japanese troops stationed on the island of Zuzima, 40 miles from Masampo, Corea, has been ordered to be in readiness to land in Corea in the event of a rupture. The Japanese commercial agent at Vladivostok has been ordered to leave.

Vienna Receives News.

Vienna, Feb. 8.—The news of the rupture of diplomatic relations between Japan and Russia was published here in special editions. It did not create much excitement and it is considered, mostly in the light of possible Balkan complications.

Shanghai, Feb. 8.—The British regiment, the Sherwood Foresters, is preparing to sail on the steamer Kwang Ping to Chin Wang Tae, where the railroad from Tientsin to Kien Chau passes the great wall. The movement of this regiment is presumably to safeguard the Tien Tsin-New Chwang railroad, which enters the great wall at Chin Wang Tae. It is reported that the Russians are seizing various points on the northern part of this line.

LEWIS AND CLARK FAIR BILL PASSES IN SENATE

Washington, Feb. 8.—After listening to speeches by Hopkins and Clay in support of the Panama canal treaty, the senate today passed a bill appropriating \$1,650,000 for the Lewis and Clark exposition at Portland. When the bill came up for consideration, Gallinger suggested that it go over. "Why," asked Mitchell, "you might as well let it pass now as at any time." Gallinger withdrew his objection.

Bailey entered a formal objection to the passage of the bill, but did not press it.

Platt, of Connecticut, offered an amendment prohibiting the opening of the exposition on Sunday and it was agreed to, the vote being 25 to 17.

On motion of Mitchell the sixteenth section of the bill, appropriating \$350,000 for building a permanent memorial to Lewis and Clark, was stricken out. The bill was then passed.

LEGISLATORS TO RELIEVE CITY OF EMBERS

Governor of Maryland Issues Proclamation Calling Special Legislature to Provide Aid

General Assembly Meets at Once at Annapolis and Proceed to Business.

BILL TO SUSPEND BUSINESS

Bill to be Introduced Appropriating Quarter of Million For the Relief of the Destitute.

Baltimore, Feb. 8.—Governor Warfield this morning issued a proclamation calling a special session of the legislature to meet tonight to provide for the relief of the stricken city. This evening the general assembly met at Annapolis. A bill was immediately introduced declaring business suspended for 10 days in Baltimore in order to enable business men to get their business affairs into as good shape as possible. The bill was immediately passed and signed by the governor. A relief bill will be introduced tomorrow, appropriating \$250,000 for the relief of the destitute.

The burned district is bounded on the west by Liberty street, on the north by Lexington street, on the east by Jones Falls and on the south by the Basin.

The city was under the strictest military control. All around the burned area was stretched a cordon of soldiers who held up all comers at the point of bayonets. The police brought from neighboring cities, patrolled the district, and at the limits of the fire zone placed armed sentries.

Monister, Feb. 8.—A skirmish is reported to have taken place between Turkish troops and revolutionists in the Komitagis-Terin district, in which five Turks and four revolutionists were killed.



DECORATING

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Monday, January 4, 1904.

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